

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §103

Referring to the currently amended Claim 1 presented above, please, find here my remarks to the Office Action of 10/06/05 on the patents allegedly anticipating Claim 1:

- The Japanese Patent 3-169984 most striking difference from the current invention lies with the signs of the curvatures at the top and bottom surfaces of slide tracks. Thus, the Japanese Patent in figure 4 depicts a slide track where the top surface is sagged upward and the bottom surface is sagged downward while my invention requires that each of the slide tracks should have convexities of its sliding surfaces which always look down. The Japanese design is, obviously, copied from a sort of machinery where keeping of an upper pad at the same level during all process of vibration is the must while the magnitude of a lateral force of resistance is of no primary importance. The very presence of the tooth-gear sliding surfaces in the Japanese design anticipates that, due to developing of a considerable lateral shear, a smooth sliding surface cannot be sufficient. On the other hand, in my invention, where minimizing of a shear transfer from the ground to the building superstructure is a priority, a smooth sliding surface is the only adequate solution.
- Yaghoubian's U.S. Patent No 4,726,161 in figure 5 shows a vertical guide or stem (21) which is, mechanically, similar to the column stub from my invention. However, his stem in its lower end, in contrast with my stub, is unrestrained not only against rotation but against any lateral displacement too.
- Tada et al.'s U.S. Patent No 4,188,681 proposes a bridge support structure that really incorporates a self-lubricating spherical foot bearing but their structure is not a kind of a seismic base isolation device like my *earthquake protector*: Tada's support simply cannot and is not intended to accommodate any lateral displacements.

Conclusions

Thanks again for your critical remarks which resulted in the current amendment of Claim 1 and of Abstract of Disclosure. However, there are no reasons to believe that the prior art may compromise novelty of the proposed *earthquake protector*. Though none of the elements of my *earthquake protector* is novel by itself, their combination for the specific purpose of earthquake protection is, nevertheless, unique both technically and in sense of performance (see, e.g., <http://www.ecs.csun.edu/~shustov/EP-2005.htm>).